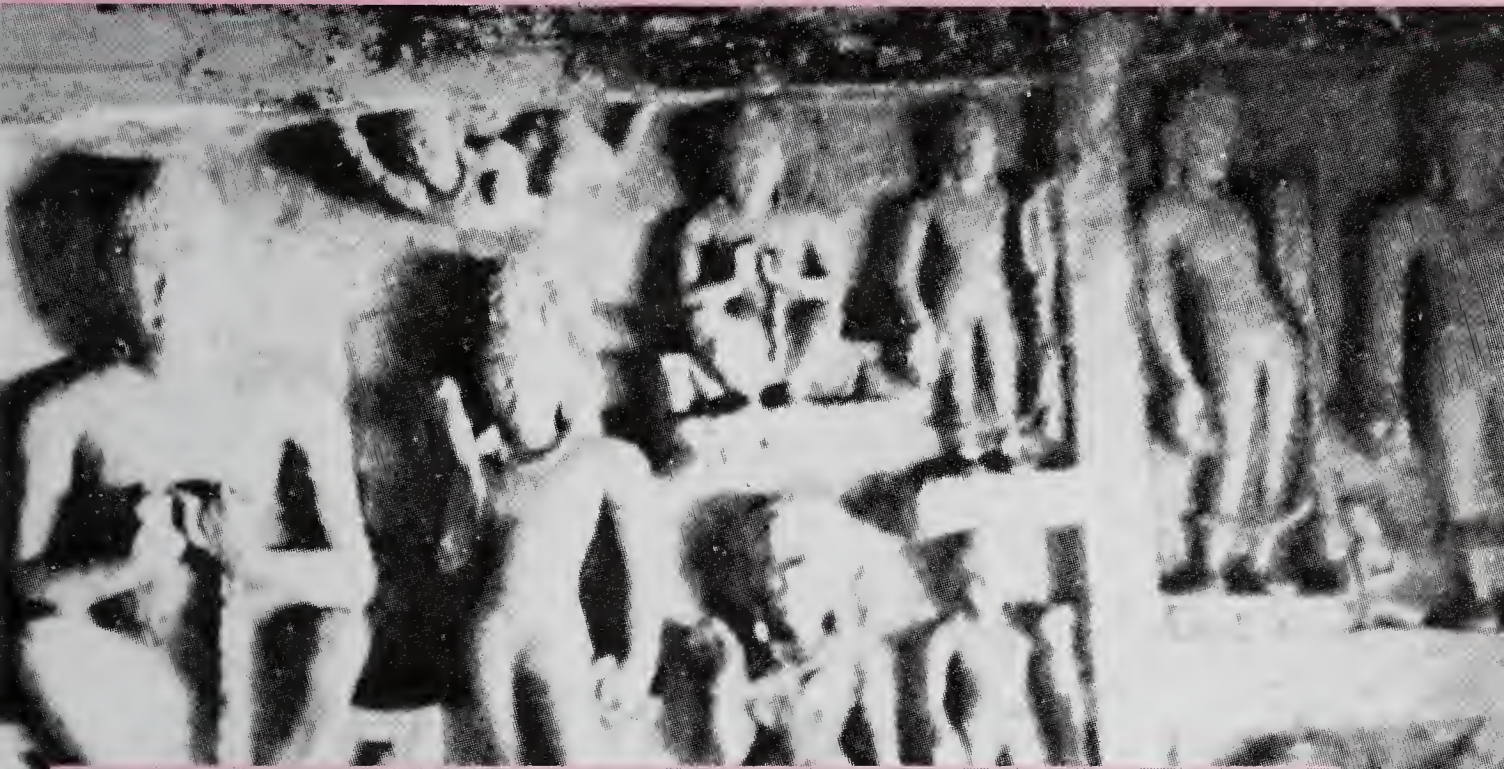
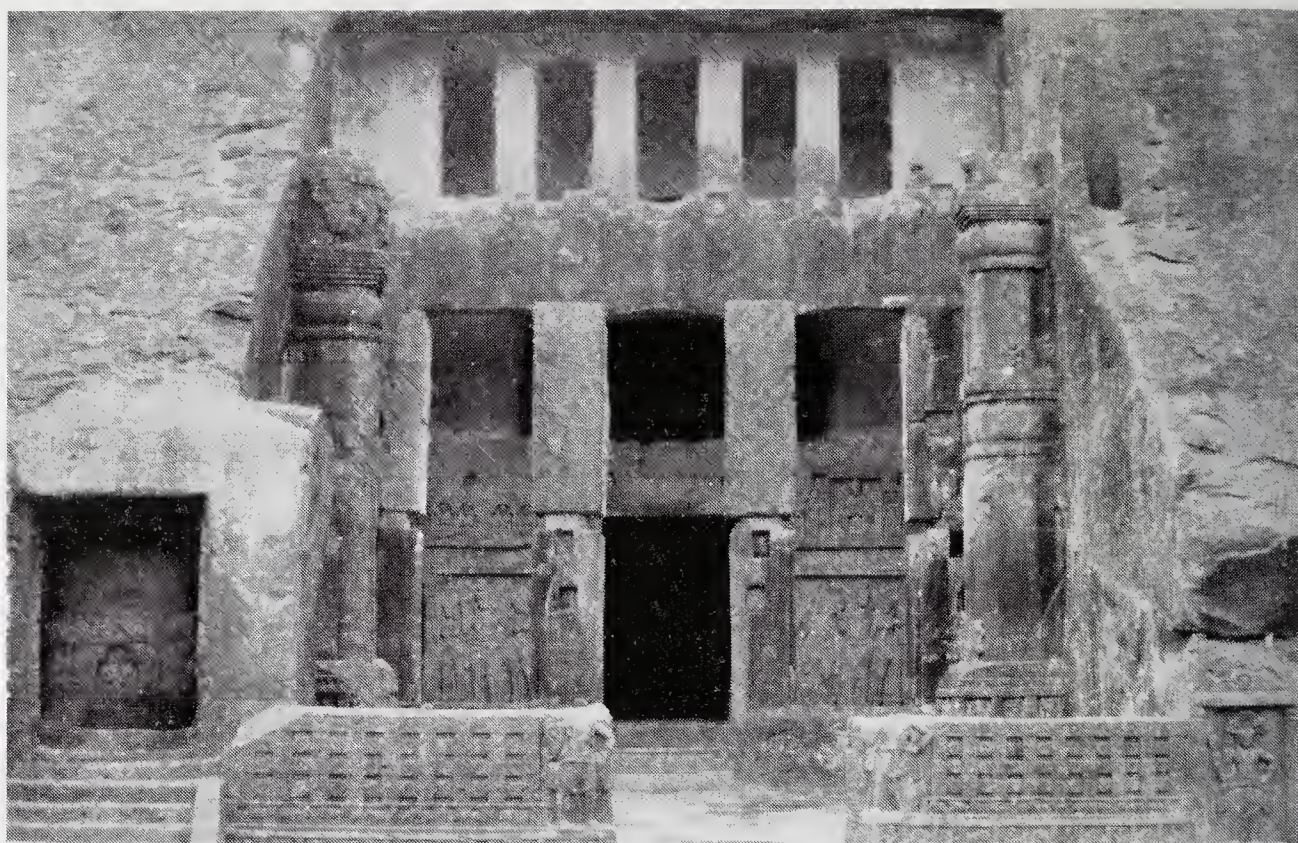


GUIDE TO KANHERI CAVES





□ CAVE NO. 1 : FRONT VIEW

□ CAVE NO. 11 : FRONT VIEW



PREFACE

The word *Kanheri* is originated from the Sanskrit word *Krishnagiri*. *Krishna* generally stands for black mountain. The other name of *Kanheri* in vogue was '*Khanderi*' which also means black mountain. The following three inscriptions in the caves mention "Krishna-Saila", "Kanha Shele", "Krishnagiri" (Cave Nos. 21, 98, 101, respectively.)

These Rock-cut temples are numbered 109 but few more are in the vicinity. These caves are dated from 1st Century B.C. to 9th Century A.D. Most of them are the Buddhist Viharas meant for residence, study and meditation. There are a few Chaityas wherein rock-cut Stupas meant for congregational worship can be seen. The large number of Viharas obviously show that a well organised establishment of Buddhist monks existed at Kanheri and was connected with many trade centres well known in those days, such as the ports of Sopara, Kalyan, Nasik, Paithan and Ujjain. It seems that Kanheri caves were affected directly but impartially by the exchange of trade between the western world and also by the area close to west of India. This you can clearly mark from the inscription given on the pillar at the left hand side of the cave No. 3. In cave No. 3, on the above said pillar, they have mentioned about Rajatalaka, which is the ancient name of the present Aurangabad city situated in Marathwada, where you can see the world famous Ellora

caves. They have also mentioned the name of 'Paithan', which was once the capital of Satavahana. Also we can assert from the inscription in the extreme Corner of cave No. 3 (while entering to main Chaitya to your left) that Kanheri was a well flourished University and a reputed centre of study at that time. They have mentioned in the inscription that "The image Bhagvat, (Buddha) is the meritorious gift of the ascetic Buddhaghosha, guardian of the great gandhakuti, pupil of the revered Dharmavatsa, a teacher of the three pitakas, who followed the religion of divine Buddha". This is well supported by the new inscriptions discovered by Shri. V. M. Wani, caretaker, Kanheri caves in 1974. (Deciphered by Sau. Shobhana Gokhale, Deccan College, Pune). This new inscriptions, obtained from burial ground, prove that the Kanheri was an important seat of learning in ancient period. It is for the first time that nearly forty inscriptions were discovered by Shri. V. M. Wani and from them we get nearly eighteen names of great teachers in whose memory the commemorative Stupas were erected.

In this area we come across nearly more than 100 inscriptions. Out of them three are in pallavis, two in Sanskrit, one or two in Devanagari and rest are in Brahmi Script. The ten inscriptions are of the time of Vasistaputra (L.A.D.133-162), 20 are of the time of Gautamiputra II (L.A.D.177-196), 50 are of the time of 5th and 6th Century and of the 8th century, three belong to 9th or 10th century and one to the 11th and rest belong to the 15th century.

Nos. 3, 11, 12, 21 & 74 caves give the dates and names of the kings and donors. The donors are mostly from the business community such as gold smiths, black smiths and merchants. Few of them are women donors also.

The record of Purna in Sopara (225 B.C.), the place situated at 20 kilometers from Kanheri, was once a prominent seat of literary activity. It is said that Arjuna-the hero of Mahabharata-one of the greatest epics of Hindu religion, visited this place while on his way to Somanath in Kathiawar (Gujarat) from the holy place of Shurparak or Sopara. The different kings who ruled this area of Kanheri and Sopara were the Nahapan Kings (78 A.D.), who have used the word Krishnagiri on many occasions.

A copper plate found by Mr. Bird (1839) denotes the 245 year of the Triakuta Kings belonging to (176 A.D.) the Gupta period. Two silver

coins of the period of Krishnaraja, found in 1881 in Bombay show the early Rashtrakuta king Krishna (375 A.D. to 400 A.D.). The Silahara king followed after the Rashtrakuta (810 A.D. to 1260 A.D.). The Portuguse then became the masters of the west areas of Kanheri about the year 1534. The Maratha empire ruled from 1760. Lastly the British became the masters of this region in 1774.

Kanheri caves are known to be the important Buddhist monuments. Some caves belong to the Hinayana phase and some to the Mahayana. These caves range-over a period of long duration because they were excavated at different times. The highest cave here is situated at about 1500 feet above the sea level.

The Kanheri caves are 45 kilometers from Mumbai and 10 kilometers from Borivali East. The way leading to the caves runs through a most beautiful and natural surroundings of National park. The zigzag concrete road is very fascinating and one enjoys walking on it. The atmosphere and the scenic beauty is simply enchanting and one is tempted to linger and wander endlessly in the vicinity of these caves.

It will be very interesting to know some details about some prominent caves at Kanheri. I would like to highlight some before going to caves.

Identification of Taras and other Saktis along with Akshobhya Buddha and an eleven headed Avalokiteshwar in cave No. 41 points directly to the tantric practice there. The dates range from as early as the second or the first century B.C., clear through the tenth century A.D. Heavy concentration of the production of Artforms appears to have played dominant role in three prominent periods of cultural activity, late first and second centuries A.D., forth or fifth century, seventh and eighth centuries. Thus activities were sustained through out the dynasties of the Satavahanas, the Vakatkas (Guptas), and the Silaharas (Rashtrakutas). The site of Kanheri caves therefore presents a glimpse of accessible, interesting and often splendid account of the history and the culture of Buddhist India.

Two motifs, which appears at Kanheri caves are :

- 1) **The eleven headed Avalokiteshwara**
- 2) **Makara which appears on the Buddha's throne at about shoulder level. It is a distnctive but rare motif which apprears only at few sites**

□ **HISTORY OF THE AREA**

3rd	B. C. Mauryas (Ashok)
2nd	B. C. Yawanas
2nd	B. C. (Kushanas)
40	B. C. (Satavahanas)
30	B. C.
37-27	B. C. Satvahanas-Krishna I or Krishnaraja
27-17	B. C. Satakarni I.
1st	A. D. Nahapana
124-130	A. D. Satavahanas Return Gautami Putra Satakarni
130-159	A. D. Satavahanas Vasisthiputra Pulumavi (Son Serisena)
159-166	A. D. Satavahanas Vasisthiputra Sivasri Satakarni (Son-in-law of Rudrasena. Seythian Ruler of North).
167 to 174	Satavahanas Sivaskanda Satakarni Yajnashri
3rd	A. D. Decline of Satavahanas, Decline in Roman Trade Rise of Vakastakas on east (Feudatories of Guptas) Rise of Guptas in the north central Mid-4th Abhiras of Nasik under Suzerainty of Gupta.
5th (2nd Quarter)	Trikutakas Indrodatta
5th (3rd Quarter)	Dahrasena (Dahragana)
5th (4th Quarter)	Vyagrasena (Vayagragana)
6th (A.D.)	Surakings (Minar Tribe)
Mid 6th to end 6th	of Kalachuris. (Decline of Guptas in North Central)
625-643	Pulkesin II (Harsha on North) (Visit of Huain Tsang)
Last 7th	(Vikramaditya I)
733-758	Rashtra Kutas Dantidurga
758-773	Rashtrakutas Krishna I
Silahara	(or Feudatory of Rashtrakutas)
853 (")	Amoghvarahas)
	(Pullasakti, Silahara Feudatory and his son Kapardin)
973	Fall of Rashtrakutas
8th to 13th	Silharas King
1260	Fall of Last Silaharas King
Someswara	to Yadav Prime Mahadeo

CAVE NUMBERS

(Letters Denoting - N = New, O = Old, I = Inscription)

N.	O.	I.	N.	O.	I.	N.	O.	I.	N.	O.	I.
1	1	-	11	10	3	21	81	1	31	11	-
2	2	5	12	78	2	22	82	1	32	12	1
3	3	10	13	98	-	23	-	-	33	13	-
4	4	1	14	97	-	24	83	-	34	14	1 Path
5	-	1	15	-	-	25	-	-	35	15	-
6	6	-	16	96	1	26	84	1	36	16	-
7	7	3	17	95	-	27	85	-	37	17	-
8	8	-	18	94	-	28	88	1	38	18	-
9	0	-	19	79	-	29	86	-	39	19	1
10	93	-	20	80	1	30	87	-	40	20	-
41	21	1	51	71	-	61	99	1	71	31	-
42	22	1	52	72	1	62	73	-	72	30	-
43	23	-	53	42	-	63	74	-	73	29	1
44	-	-	54	43	1	64	75	1	74	36	1
45	24	-	55	44	-	65	76	1	75	37	1
46	25	-	56	45	-	66	77	1	76	91	-
47	26	-	57	46	1	67	35	-	77	90	-
48	27	-	58	47	-	68	34	1	78	50	-
49	60	-	59	48	1	69	33	-	79	51	-
50	70	1	60	49	1	70	32	-	80	52	1
81	53	-	86	40	1	91	65	-	97	60	1
82	54	-	87	41	1	92	-	-	98	59	2
83	55	-	88	68	1	93	64	1	99	58	1
84	38	-	89	67	-	95	62	-	100	57	-
85	39	-	90	66	4	96	61	-	101	56	2+
44 Epitaphs											

Kanheri Inscriptions which require reading :

Ludder	West	Old C-No.	New C. No.	Ludder	West	Old C-No.	New C. No.
997	14	10	11	1019	38	75	64
1003	21	31	75	1025	45	82	22
1008	26	49	60	1026	46	84	21
1009	27	52	80	1027	47	26	18
1010	28	53	81	1030	50	94	18
1011	22	56	101	1033	57	95	17
1015	34	64	93	1034	58	38	85,86,87
1017	36	99	61	-	24	43	54

Deciphered recently by Sou. Shobhana Ghokhale

Rockcut dagobas, inside large niches appear in several locations at Kanheri caves and are perhaps the oldest form of the cave Stupas.

Bhaja cave Stupas resemble with the Kanheri style. Inside cave No. 13 (i.e. new 33) E.W. West discovered the remains of four tapes in 1861 (E.W. West Results of excavation in cave 13 i.e. new C. No. 33) at Kanheri JIBBRAS, volume VI 1961 p.p. 157-160. West unearthed interesting objects from the debris. One of the most interesting of the sealings is shown on plate 20. It depicts a seated Buddha in Bhumisparsha Mudra with ornaments around the figure and an inscription underneath.

The inscription on all the sealings is the same common Buddhist prayer, "*Ye dharma hetu prabhava hetun teshan Tathagato hyavadat teshan cha Ye nirodha evamvadi Mahashramana*". The lettering of the inscription is similar to that of tenth century form, pointing directly again to Buddhist activity of Kanheri caves. West also reported that burned sealings like these also had been found in the Island of Ceylon (Shri Lanka). Silaharas probably had connections with Ceylon. The 10th Century finds in C. No. 13 (New 33) tend to substantiate the belief.

Creating Stupas was an important activity at Kanheri caves. Some Stupas served the cause of burial, others were used for worship. Still others were either the symbols or illustrations of mystic and cult practices. The Stupas in niches are the earliest ones dating back even the first century B.C. The burial gallery stupas were constructed some time in the 1st Century A.D. or before and the work was continued in phased manner in the next centuries also. The work of Stupas in the court yard of C.No. 3 is dated back in fourth or fifth century A.D. and the topes of C.No. 31 are dated tenth century.

□□□

CAVE NO. 1

It is unfinished Vihara. There are only two pillars outstanding outside which resemble to those at Elephanta caves i.e. cushion Capitals. At the beginning it was perhaps intended to make this cave two storeyed but due to defect in rock it had to be left half way.

CAVE NO. 2

The cave is a Vihara with two Stupas. Just behind the Stupa is a panel of Buddhist litany praying Lord Padmapani to seek enlightenment on freedom from the human agony and sorrow. The same panel is repeated in C. No. 41 and 90. In this panel we can clearly see that to the left of Padmapani, at the top, an enraged elephant attacking human-being. At the bottom, ship wreck is shown. To the right of Padmapani, at the top, is seen a Lion attacking human being. Avalokiteshwar saves people from shipwreck, wild animals, floods, fire, robbery, old hag etc. He is the saviour of human beings as prescribed in Saddharma Pundalika. In the corner, adjacent to Padmapani a Sculpture exhibits nine devotees bowing to Buddha. The names of the devotees are mentioned in the adjoining inscription as Nanno Vaidya, Rano Bhaskarah, Bharavin, Chelladeva, Boppai, Bhattakhasu Avvaipo etc. It is in the mixed dialect characters of fourth and fifth century. There is one more inscription on the water cistern mentioning the name of the donor for the cistern water (Soma Rasa), Samidatta, a goldsmith of Kalyan. This type of inscription denotes the pattern of 2nd century A.D., 133-162, the time of Vashistiputra. Another two inscriptions in the back wall mentions donations given by, Negam i.e. trader from Kalyan and Nasik. Just near by the Stupa wall seven manushya Buddhas along with Maitreya Buddha with a crown are shown.

CAVE NO. 3

Chaitya cave No. 3 is the largest and architecturally most elaborated cave at Kanheri. It is the most important cathedral or Chaitya of the Kanheri Caves. The style and the plan of it resembles to that of the great Karla Caves. The measurements are approximately 25-60 meters long, 12-15 meters wide including the aisles and 10-56 meters in height. In front is a spacious court. The front parapet wall nicely decorated with the rail pattern festoons along the top. At the extreme

bottom a hunting scene has been carved. The specious Varandah is supported by thick massive pillars. These pillars support the other edge of the end walls, gigantic figures of Buddha on the sides are carved on raised plinth. On front wall the donor couples are carved in relief of men and women resembling the figures in Karla caves.

There are ten inscriptions in and about this cave. In one of the inscription it is mentioned that the cave was made in the regime of King Yajnashri Satakarni Gotami Putra, (A.D. 177-196) by two merchant brothers, Gajasena and Gajavira from upper India. This cave was dedicated to the Bhadrayani School of Buddhism. At that time the Kanheri was well established centre of learning. This can be supported by the newly discovered epitaphs from burial ground.

The interior of Chaitya hall is supported by massive pillars whose tops are decorated with fine sculptures, Formerly the roof had wooden railings similar to Karla caves but now no wooden remainings are left. There are two huge Stambhas, on the top of them are sculptured four vigorous lions. They are meant to protect the religion from outside evils. The other pillars have Yakshas holding a bowl. The inscription on the small Stupa just near the huge pillar is a common Buddhist prayer "**Ye dharm hetu Prabhava hetun teshan Tathagato hyavadat teshancha ye nirodha evamvadi Mahasharamana.**"

The shape of the main Chaitya is designed as per elephant's back. There are fine sculptures of seven Buddhas accompanied with Maitreya Buddha.

After entering the varandah to your right (under the figure of Buddha in the Varandah of the Chaitya cave), an inscription runs as follows. "This image of Bhagavat is the meritorius gift of the ascetic Buddha gosha, the guardian of the great gandhakuti and pupil of the reverend Dharmavatsa, a teacher of the three pitakas who followed the religion of divine Buddha."

In the inscription on the right hand pillar (Larger one) even the date is mentioned in the third line i.e. mahapakhe panchame (5 divase). The work has been executed by Bodhika, the pupil of the teacher and theras, the reverend seumla who acted as overseer.

On the left hand pillar, it is mentioned that the Kanheri was situated on the 'Paithan pathe'. Paithan in those days was the capital of Satavahan's Dynasty. In this inscription they have also mentioned

the present city of Aurangabad (In Marathwada) as Rajatalak. To your left hand, after entering the varandah, in the extreme covener-the inscription runs as : 1) *Budhasya Bhagavatas Sasananukari Traipitko paddhyaya*. 2) *Bhadanta Dharmavasta. Sishyasya bhikshore Budhaghoshashya*. 3) *Mahagandhkuti Varikasya Bhagvat pratimeyam deyadharmmah*.

CAVE NO. 4

In this cave, after ascending few steps we can see a Stupa. The back ground of this Stupa is carved with Buddha in different postures. On the strip of Harmika there is an inscription stating donation given by a woman Shivapalitanika, wife of a goldsmith.

CAVE NO. 5 AND 6

Both are water cisterns and are donated by a minister named Sateraka. Inscription runs as follows :

Amatasya Saterakasya Paniya Bhajanam Deyadham.

CAVE NO. 7

It is a simple Vihara having three water cisterns & two cells. One donated by Samika, a merchant from Sopara and the other two are donated by a goldsmith Sulasadatta of Chemulak (i.e. present Chembur), the son of Robin Mitra.

CAVE NO. 8

It is a simple water cistern.

CAVE NO. 9

It is a large plain room with four unfinished columns.

CAVE NO. 10

It is an unfinished cave having ample water cisterns. It is interesting to note that some ovens are cut here in the rocks. It indicates that there may be a kitchen in this cave.

CAVE NO. 11

This cave is known as Darbar Hall or Assembly Hall. This hall can be very well compared with cave No. 5 of Ellora, known as

Mahanwada with a difference of direction seen in laying the sitting arrangement. There is a small chapel in the east. To the lower side of this cave, a very important inscription is carved on water cistern (above the water cistern) which is purely in Sanskrit. In this inscription they have mentioned the name of Kumar Guru who used to teach Mahayoga i.e. Mahayoga. Again they have mentioned that a Tikya Kumar Guru Swadhayaya Dhyayan Hat. etc. Only four lines had been so far deciphered by Rao Bahadur Dixit. On the lintal-there is another inscription of Rashtrakutas deciphered by Dr. Mirashi.

CAVE NO. 12

On the lintal there is an inscription, similar and contemporary to cave No. 11, deciphered by Dr. Mirashi.

CAVE NO. 13 TO 18

Cave No. 16 has an inscription mentioning about the gift of negam i.e. trader from Nalasopara. The rest are simple Viharas. On the Steps of cave No. 18, there is an inscription, which mentions about the meritorious gift of the path given by Rohini Mitas.

CAVE NO. 19 TO 30

All are simple Viharas.

CAVE NO. 21

On the left wall there is an inscription. In this inscription they have mentioned the place Magathane. It is just behind the Cable Corporation in Borivali (East) and you will notice the reminiscents of Buddhism there. This cave was excavated by a Merchant from Kalyan and his family in the reign of Gautamiputra, Satakarni. He donated for a cave hall in the mountain, the hill of Krishna Shele, for the use of community of the ascetics from the fourth quarters of the horizon, a meritorious gift for the benefit of his own parents and of the welfare and happiness of all living beings. He had given two hundred rupees as fixed deposit with the instructions to utilize the interest for specific purpose. He had also given a field on the term of half pana. That means half of the crop should be handed over to the owner or any other person in the village of Magathane as per his desire.

CAVE NO. 22 AND 25

There are inscriptions. The letters in the cave No. 26 are ornamented. Cave No. 25 was recently excavated by Shri. S. R. Rao, Superintending Archaeologist where he came across a black smith's furnace.

CAVE NO. 31, 32 AND 33

These three caves are simple dwelling places having moon shaped steps outside and sandclock design on the pillars and pilasters. Cave no. 31 has a big Stupa inside.

In Cave No. 32 there is an inscription which mentions about the gift given by Siddham Upasak from Kalyan. He had donated for the cave and a water cistern. He also had given some fixed deposit for the welfare of Bhikhu Sangh etc.

CAVE NO. 34

A well preserved cave. On the ceiling of it you will find some paintings where Buddha is shown in a Bhumisparsha Mudra, (i.e. he is touching mother earth.)

CAVE NO. 39 AND 40

In Cave No. 39 there is an inscription-mentioning about fixed deposits & C. No. 40 is a simple Vihara.

CAVE NO. 41

Eleven headed Padmapani Avalokiteshwara is shown here with Buddhist Litany. Avalokiteshwara, as a Mahasatva, is described as having thousand arms, thousand pairs of eyes and eleven heads. He descends into the city of death and delivers all souls from damnation. He is also known as Ekadashamukha. Even the hands of this image are exactly similar to the description in the eighth century.

This was known to be the only sculpture of eleven headed Avalokiteshwar in India, but later on another was discovered in bronze which bears a great resemblance with a Nepalese Sculpture.

DAM :- Just opposite to C.No. 41, you can still mark the two existing dam walls. In the lower portion they used to store water and cultivate the land down below by channalizing this water. While going

□ CAVE NO. 3 : A SCULPTURE OF A DONOR COUPLE





□ A PHOTOGRAPHIC VIEW OF ROCK-CUT FIGURES AT KANHERI

□ A VIEW OF A ROCK-CUT STUPA : CREATING STUPAS WAS AN IMPORTANT ACTIVITY AT KANHERI. THEY WERE USED EITHER FOR WORSHIP, CULT PRACTICES OR FOR BURIAL.



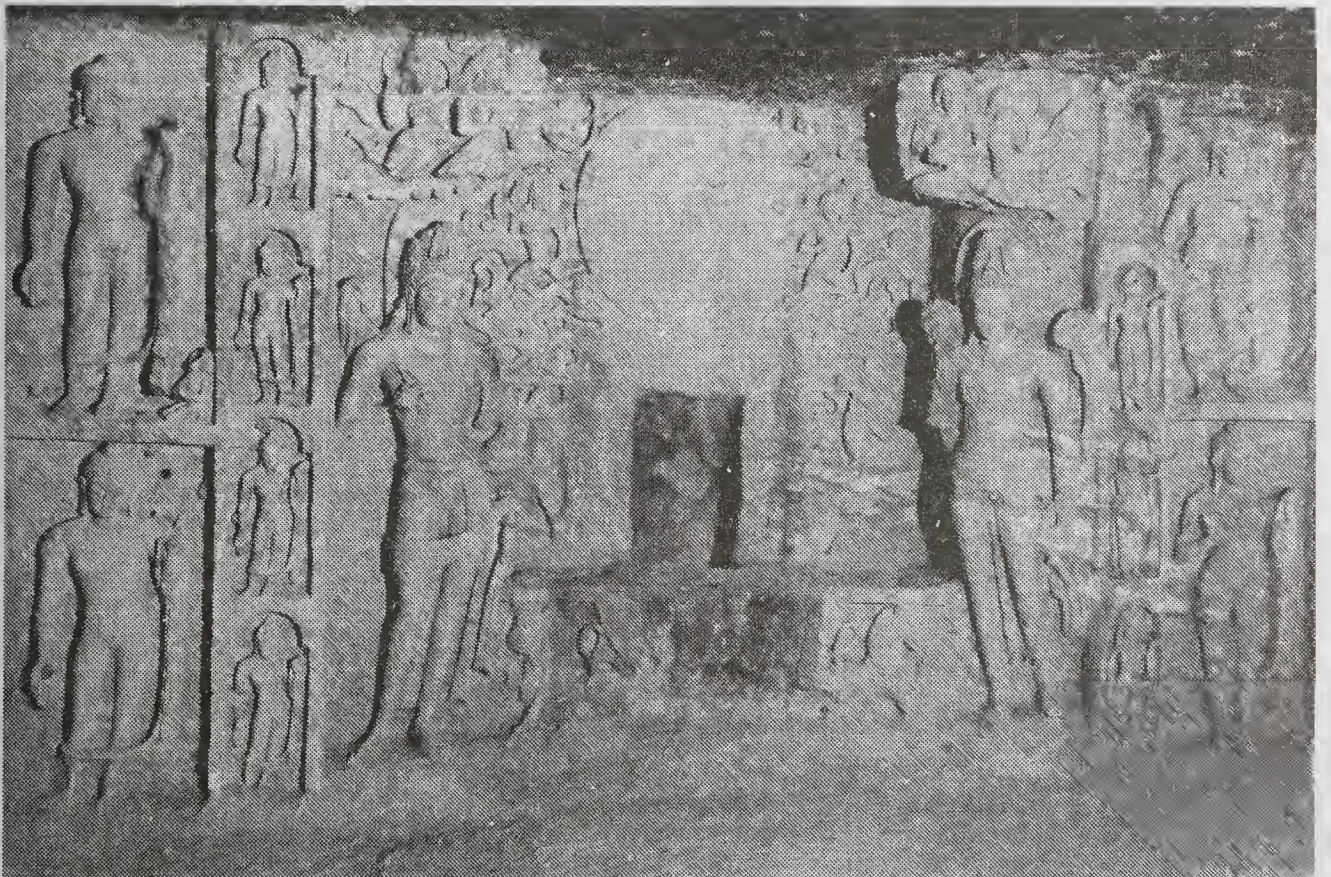


↑ □ GLIMPSES OF FEW PROMINENT SCULPTURES AT KANHERI : —
 A VALUABLE HISTORIC AND CULTURAL GLORY OF BUDDHIST INDIA
 ↓





□ CAVE NO. 90 : DECORATED THRONE WITH TWO ATTENDANTS



INSCRIPTIONS FROM KANHERI CAVES

6

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय
 अथ श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवा
 दप्रथमोऽध्यायः

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय

10

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय
 अथ श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवा
 दप्रथमोऽध्यायः

9

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय

9

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय
 अथ श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवा
 दप्रथमोऽध्यायः

4

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय
 अथ श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवा
 दप्रथमोऽध्यायः

14

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय
 अथ श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवा
 दप्रथमोऽध्यायः

5

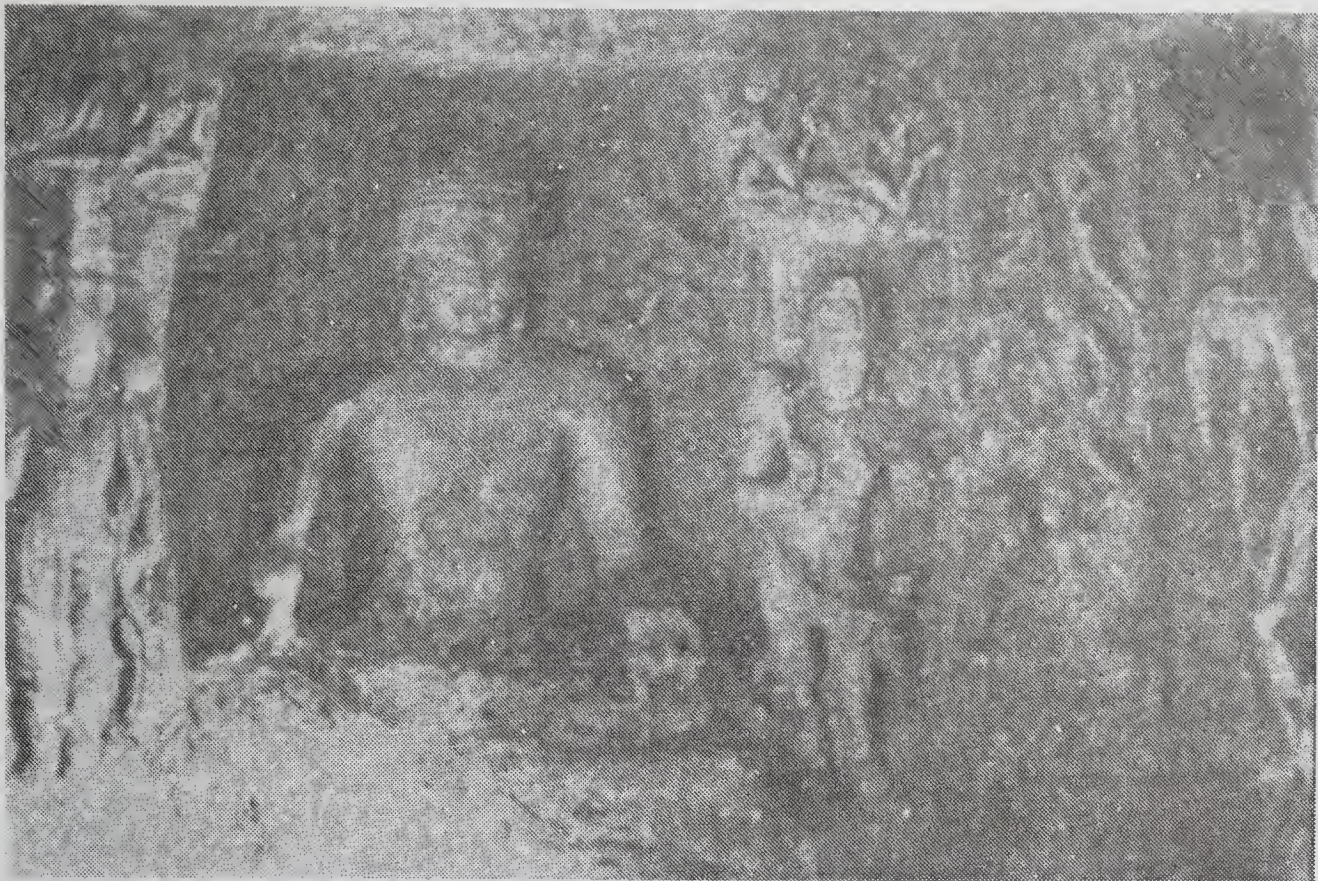
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय
 अथ श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवा
 दप्रथमोऽध्यायः



□ CAVE NO. 90 : BUDDHA SEATED ON LOTUS FLOWER,
SUPPORTED BY NAGA KING UNDERNEATH.
ABOVE : INDRA & ROYAL COUPLE



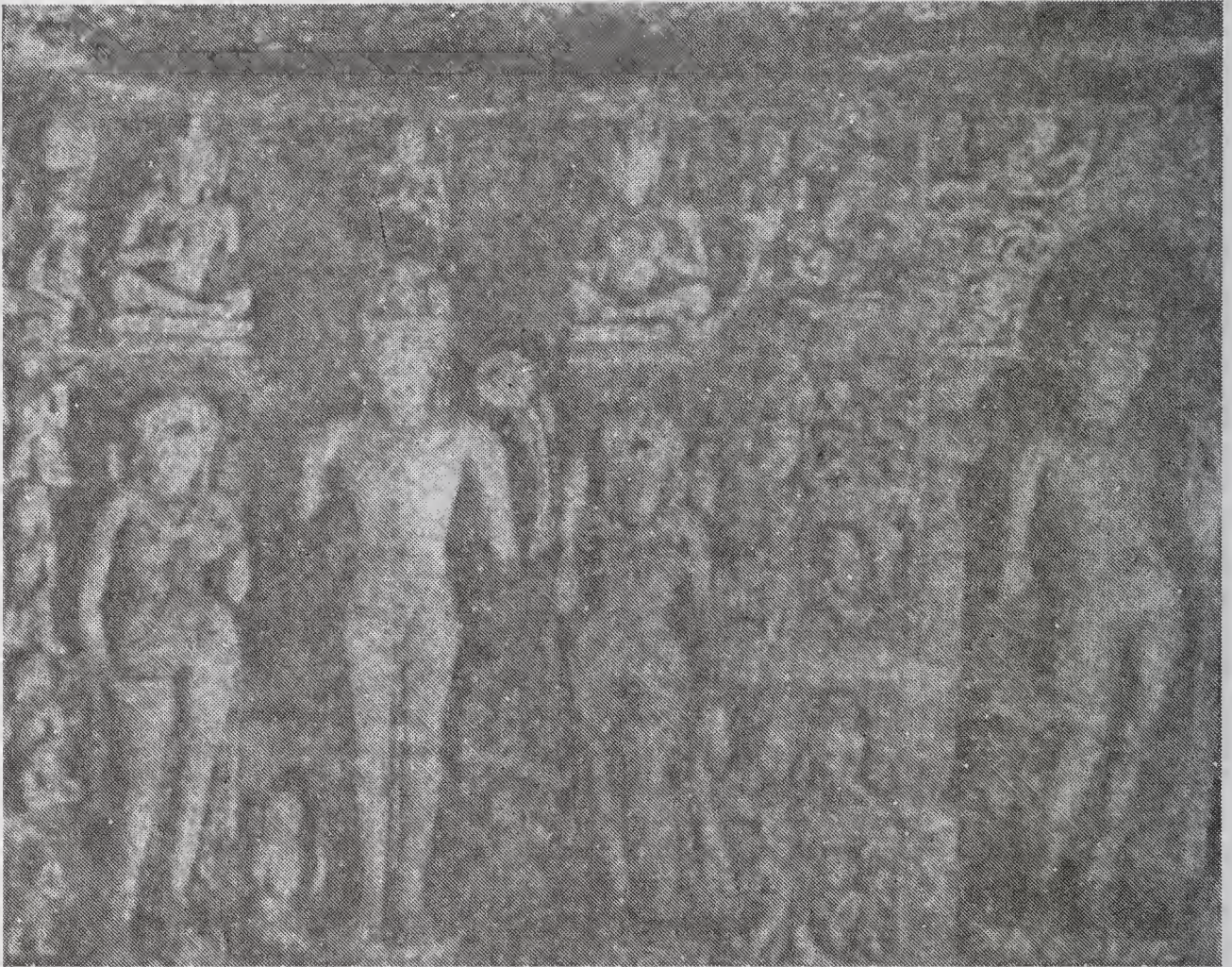
□ STUPA ON THE SOUTHERN RIDGE
AT KANHERI
(FROM THE BURIAL GROUND)



□ CAVE No. 41 : ELEVEN HEADED PADMAPANI AVALOKITESHWAR
(EKADASHAMUKHA)

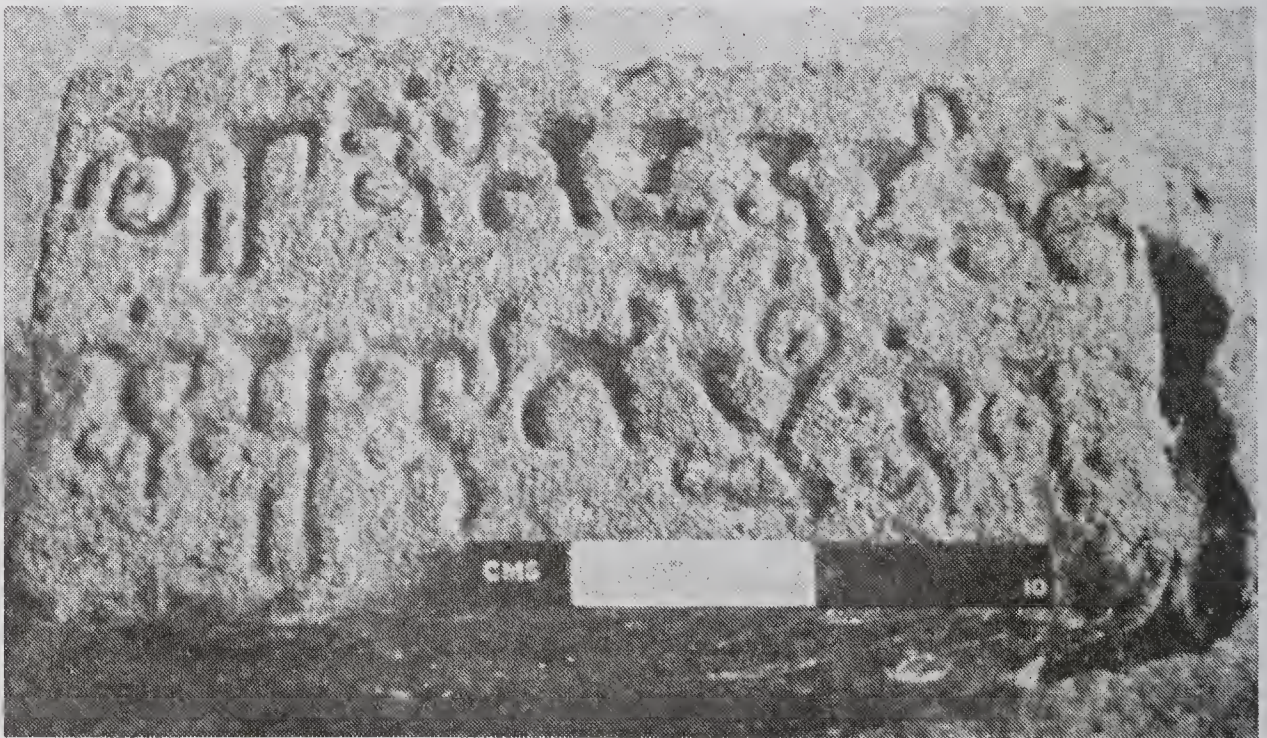
□ UNIDENTIFIED JATAK KATHA FROM BURIAL STONE STUPA

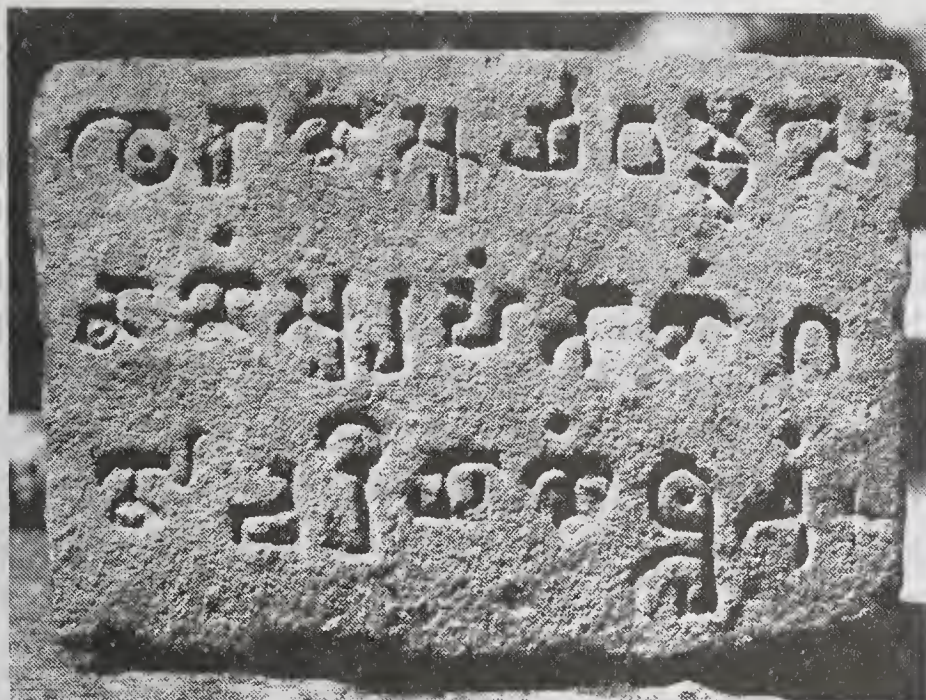




□ BUDDHIST LITANY

□ EPITAPH NO. 4





□ EPITAPH NO. 8



□ EPITAPH NO. 9



□ EPITAPH NO. 10

to C.No. 42, you can mark a stone slab having an inscription about this dam. It reads as follows :

“Panis sethis punak Sata Lokday Deyadham”. A water dam constructed for the welfare of the people.

Opposite to C.No. 41 there is an Ashram known as Anand Akhada, founded by the then pious Khadeshwari Baba who once had performed vigorous Penance. By visiting this Ashram you will come to know the life of the then ascetics. Just above the next hill, there is another such Ashram known as Gomukh, Udasi Akhada, founded by the then pious Gangadas Maharaj. While visiting these two Ashrams, you must obey the rules as desired by the authorities.

CAVE NO. 42 TO 48

These are simple Viharas but the C. No. 48 is the second largest excavation on this hill. This is just at the back of the hill. No sculptures are there. Unfortunately it is an unfinished cave.

CAVE NO. 49 TO 66

All these caves are simple in character and there is nothing special to mention about, except the inscription in C. Nos. 50, 54, 57, 59, 60, 65, 66 etc.

CAVE NO. 67

This cave is popularly known as Chitrashala as it is full of different sculptures related to the life of Buddha. Different aspects of Buddha known as *miraculous shravasti* are conceived in those sculptures. Similar pattern is shown in the varandah on western side, as shown in Ajanta paintings.

DIPANKAR JATAKA :

Megha or Sumegha, a young astatic came to the city of Paduma at the time when Dipankar Buddha was expected, wishing to make an offering of flowers to him. He found none were procurable as the king had ordered all to be reserved for his own offerings. Seeing a darkclad girl named Bhadra concealing a seven stalked Utapala flowers (i.e. blue Lotus) in her pitcher, he attempted to purchase five of the stalks for 500 pieces of money, the price the girl had paid for the whole. The girl finally agreed to the bargain, with a further condition that he should

offer the other two flowers on her behalf, and then in the successive life he would take her for his wife. However, if he arrived at Buddhahood, he should permit her to follow him as a disciple. This being agreed to, he proceeded to meet Dipankara who was entering the city. The flowers offered to him by the king and his followers formed a canopy over his head. Megha threw the Seven stalks of Utapala towards the Buddhas and in accordance with his desire they remained in mid-air, crowning the canopy, and moving as he moved. Megha being repulsed by the crowd who were spreading their garments in the city, Dipankara formed a muddy place in front of them, on which the asectic immediately placed his deer-skin garment and undoing his hair, spread over the skin for Buddha to pass over, who then granted his secret that he should become Sakyamuni. This is also found later on monestry walls of kabul. Some Buddha figures resemble with that of Sarnath.

CAVE NO. 73

It is a cave with a pani podhi i.e. water cistern. It has come up from the gift given by the negam i.e. trader from Kalyan. He gave fixed deposit as well.

CAVE NO. 74

Here you find an inscription about Madhuri Putra who holds the place among the Andhara Kings. In his reign the merchant and house holder from Kalyan, the son of Vishnunandin made the cave.

CAVE NO. 80 TO 83

These are simple Viharas except an inscription in C. No. 80, which offers an explanation about fixed deposit.

CAVE NO. 84 TO 87

These caves are considered as burial ground-cemetery. There are innumerable brick Stupas along with a vey big one. In the summer of 1974, an effort of the energetic Caretaker of Kanheri, Shri. V. M. Wani, brought to the light about forty four inscriptions, an equal number of Hermika stones and a few sculptures amongst which is a beautifully sculpted slab which provided an additional information to create more awarness about these caves. All this material was discovered from the nallah at the foot of the southern ridge, the site of a number of dilapidated

brick Stupas which has been referred to as the necropolis at Kanheri. Besides Kanheri, we find such Stupas at Bhaje, Pitalkahora and Karasambra complexes where they were raised evidently to commemorate the memory of highly venerated monks. But in these three cases the Stupas are monolithic and carved in rock. It is quite possible that the large monosyllabic inscriptions discovered by Shri. Wani belong to these brick Stupas of Kanheri.

The finding of the Asokan edicts at Sopara, a place not very far away from Kanheri, tends to indicate that the Stupa at Sopara and the monastery at Kanheri were the earliest Buddhist monuments established in the Deccan. The extent of the Kanheri monastery is evident from its inscriptions. Moreover the fact that it was the only monastery to have remained exclusively Buddhist and active till the coming of the Portuguese in the fifteenth century underlines its position as an important seat of Buddhist learning. A great hierarchy of monks must have preached the Law at this place. To have raised commemorative Stupas for some of them seems quite appropriate.

A path made up of well cut steps runs along the rolling ridges towards the south and descends down to the naturally hollowed terrace where our area, the necropolis, is located. As one approaches the terrace which runs east-west, he comes across the debris of about twenty small brick Stupas. Beyond these are the ruins of the large prominent Stupa to which the *sculptured slab belongs*. Beyond the stone Stupa the terrace rises towards the south-east. Here are the debris of almost forty brick stupas ranging from four to six feet in diameter. It is difficult to assess the architectural features of any one of them from their present state of ruin. From the existing ruins, it is possible to assess that the brick Stupas had moulded bases though any conjecture beyond this would seem futile. The hermika stones recovered by Shri. Wani evidently belong to these Stupas. It is possible that the shape of these Stupas must have resembled to those that have been carved on the walls of other caves or could even have resembled the one carved in cave 31. The entire complex in that event may belong to the fourth-fifth century. It was as early as 1853 that the site was first surveyed by E. W. West, whose records are the only basic information so far available for study. But it seems that among the Buddhist cave temples in the Deccan, Kanheri is much less studied than the others inspite of its vast complex and sculptural and

inscriptional material, (published in Lalit Kala No. 18 by Shri Sadashiv Gorakshakar under the heading "A SCULPTURED FRIEZE FROM KANHERI.") These inscriptions have been deciphered by Sau. Shobhana Gokhle from Deccan College, Pune, under the heading - "The Memorial Stupa Gallery at Kanheri". New inscriptions of great historical value also have come to the notice in recent time. The inscriptions are epitaphs averaging 25 cm x 16 cm, in size. They immortalize the names of great monks and note their scholastic merits or the stage they had attained in their spiritual span of life. They also record the period of erection of the Stupas of monks. These Stupas apparently appear to be made of the bricks and are located today in the burial-gallery. The inscriptions written on them belong to the later part of the fifth-or-early sixth century and is boxheaded variety of Brahmi. The language is Prakrit. The characters are closely related to those of Ajanta and Ghatotkacha Cave inscriptions. Among these inscriptions, the following few are more significant.

1. L1 - Theranam Āyya Vijaya
L2 - Senanam Tevijanam
L3 - Arahantanam Thubham

In the Buddhist tradition, a monk who has attained threefold knowledge is called tevijja (i.e. trividh). According to the Anguttaranikaya, the three types of knowledge are :

- (1) Pubbnivasa-knowledge of three previous existences; (2) Dibbacakkhu Divine vision : (3) Asavakhayajana-destruction of depravities.

2. L1 (the) ranam

L 2 (Ara) hantanam Jhayinam Thubham.

The inscription records that the Arahant was jhayi i.e. dhyani, a technical term for a high spiritual experience in an order of mental state. It may be described as pancagika dhyana (vitarka, vicara, priti, sukha and ekagrata) and summarized as mystic, uplifted above attention and reasoning, joyful and easy both in body and mind, suffused with a sense of ease after bliss has passed and aware of pure lucidity of mind and equanimity of heart.

L 3. The inscription records that one monk was not only an arya, mahan and arahant, but also that he was well-versed in Sadabhijana and Pratisambhida. The inscription reads :

L1 - The anam Āyya Mahanamara.

L2 - hantanam chalabhinanampati

L3 - sambhidapattanam thubha

Chalabhinana i.e. Sadabhijana indicates six mental states :
Idhi (levitation) : dibbasotam (heavenly ear), paracitta-vijana (telepathy) and the remaining three given under tevija above. A monk who attains these six kinds of knowledge is called an Arhat. The Dhammapada describes the achievement of final emancipation by six kinds of knowledge and also notes that it provides jatikhaya (freedom from rebirth).

Pubbenivasam yo vedi saggapayam ca passati

Atho jatikhayam patto abhina vosito muni

Dhammapada 26, 41, 423.

The same monk is also described as Patisambhidapatta, that is, having attained Patisambhida. There are four kinds of Patisambhida :
attahapati-sambhida, dhammapati sambhida, nirutti-pati sambhida and patibhanapati-sambhida.

Atthapati sambhida means analysis of the text.

4. This inscription reads as follows :

L1 Theranambhadanta Dama

L2 nam Anagamin thubha.

For the attainment of Arhathood, a bhikkhu has to pass through four stages : sotapanna (a bhikkhu who is following the eightfold path), sakadagami (a bhikkhu who takes only one birth), anagamin (a bhikkhu who is freed from rebirth), and arahat (a bhikkhu who is liberated from rebirth as a human being), Bhadanta Dama mentioned in this inscription had reached the stage anagamin.

5. L1 Theranam Āyya I.

L2 ndasena payutanampa

L3 Bhinanamarahantanam

L4 Sadanam thubham

The inscription records that the bhikkhu was appointed by Indrasena and the word Pabhinna indicates that the bhikku belonged to a different school or subsect.

6. L1 Theranam Āyya vahinna

L2 granam arahantanam Tila

L3 palakanam thubham

The inscription records that a Stupa was erected in the name of Tilapalaka who belonged to a different school.

7. L1 nam dhi

L2 (mu) Lanam arahanta (nam)

L3 thubham

Although the inscription is partly mutilated, it not duly describes the bhikkhu as dhi(ti) mula. Atthasalini the commentary on Dhammasangani, has described various qualities of a bhikkhu :

Cittacetaskanam dharanavasena

Avicche dato va pavatanavasena

Kusulasanam dharetiti dhiti

dhiti cesa avitthitakarita

Atthasalini, 3.285

A bhikkhu who does not deter from work, who does not avoid work, who has full control over his emotions, and who possesses a firm character is called a dhitimula.

8. L1 Theranam (Āyya) Nayenam

L2 Arahantanam thu (bham)

In this inscription, the arahant is described as nayena. According to patisambhidamaggapali, there are seventy-three kinds of knowledge. An ordinary sravaka could achieve sixty-seven categories of knowledge. The remaining six categories could be mastered only by extraordinary sravakas.

To a sarvajna, all knowledge is transparent. In Theravada, knowledge is considered to be the supreme quality in man. Knowledge as understood in Buddhism is different from the principal of Atman as Brahman in the Upanishada. The mysticism of the Upanishads is absent in Buddhism, but appropriate training of body and mind for achieving truth and excellence as propounded by the Upanishads were accepted by Buddhism. This is once again affirmed by the inscription at Kanheri.

The inscription records that Arya Sanghananda was a vasin. The visudhimagga defines vasi as a person who has control over his feelings. This control is five fold : Avajjana vasi (contemplation of samadhi), samapajjanavasi (control in attainment of samadhi),

adhitthan vasi (determination for samadhi), utthanavasi (emerging out of samadhi) and paccavekhanavasi (contemplation after samadhi)

These new inscriptions provide us an excellent clue for dating the numerous brick Stupas in two burial gallery to the late fifth or early sixth century. Two rock-cut Stupas in the small niches in the burial-gallery are plain in design. On the back wall of this gallery, there is a small inscription which belongs to the second century A.D.- it reads "Parigahita" and is recorded together with the Buddha's footprints. This indicates that the funeral ground was in use over a considerable length of time.

New kanheri Inscriptions discovered by Shri. V. M. Wani from Burial Ground.

No. 8A : L I Theranam Ārya Dhamma Se

L II nanam Arahantanam Ga

L III nacariyanam Thubham

No. 9 : L I Pachanha Arahanta

L II Gratanam Āyam Thubho.

No. 10 : This is a unique epitaph engraved on casket.

L I Theranam Āyya Mala

L II Girinam Arahantanam (wrongly interpreted

L III Thubham by Shobhana Gokhale)

No. 11 : L I Theranam Āyya Damhi

L II Lenam Arhantanam

L III Thubho.

CAVE NO. 88

Mentiones about the gift of water cistern, a cave for the salvation of his father and mother and about fixed deposit.

CAVE NO. 89

Visit this Cave No. 89 without fail. Women folks who have keen interest in hair style will be surprised to see different types of hair styles displayed in the sculptures here. They will notice that all modern hair styles are just borrowed from this cave only. (After entering this cave notice a fine specimen of a Mango tree on which a parrot seems enjoying eating a Mango fruit.)

CAVE NO. 90

In this cave you will come across few inscriptions in different Languages. In addition there is a fine sculpture of Buddha resting on Lotus flower supported by Naga Kings.

As soon as we enter in this cave, we can mark pallavi inscription on the pillars and a chinese inscription on the front wall to our left. The sculptures in this cave are most fascinating and alluring. They are plenty in number as well as amply different in characters. To the right, inside the cave, some very interesting panels such as Buddhist Litany are exhibited where in ten aspects of human calamities are displayed. The panels start from the left side of Padmapani (with Tara and Bhrikuti). An enraged elephant, a Lion, a Cobra, a fire, a ship wreck and to his right a wild animal, and old woman, robber, and the last one is indistinct. The same panel is depicted in Ajanta and Ellora. However, it is shown with Tara at Ellora, on the facade of C. No. 9

In the middle of the cave a well decorated throne is shown with two attendants. At the back-ground is Buddha seated on Lotus flower supported by Naga Kings underneath and at above is an unique sculpture of Indra with crown and at the background human figure with a thunder bolt shown above his forehead. This type of composition is also displayed in Ellora but with the Ayudha purusha Seperately.

CAVE NO. 91 TO 92

The Caves are simpel Viharas.

CAVE NO. 93

There are few sculptures in this Cave. Buddha is shown here in Muchilindra form i.e. with Cobra hood & inscription on the water cistern.

CAVE NO. 94 TO 96

Simple Viharas.

CAVE NO. 97

This cave is known as Sagar pralogan. You can see the mid-sea distinctly from this cave. It is mentioned in the inscription as (Observatory).

CAVE NO. 98, 99, 100

These are simple Viharas, except an inscription in C.No. 98 by Bhikuniy Damileya from Kaliyanikay i.e. from present Kalyan. The word Kanha Shele i.e. Kanheri hill has been used in this inscription.

CAVE NO. 101

This cave has an extraordinary location on the top of the hill from where you can have a look of Bassein fort, mid-sea and Gandhi Smriti mandir in National Park. The inscription in this cave denotes that it was used as an observatory. Kanha Giri, the old name of Kanheri is also used in this inscription. Ascending few steps from this cave an amazing lavatory system is seen. One is amazed to see the system worth studying. The flush drained down the steep rocks and later on collected in the pits, is noteworthy.

CAVE NO. 102, 109

These last Caves are Viharas and there is nothing special to be mentioned. From the top to the east a scenic view of the Tulsi lake is worth seeing. From the very top we see again five big storage tanks for bathing and washing clothes. The visitors with keen interest in historic monuments are requested to visit the Mandapeshwar cave in the vicinity of Kanheri. The Sculpture of Natarajat here and few others are worth seeing.

Note : Visitors are requested to follow the numbers carved in rock only.

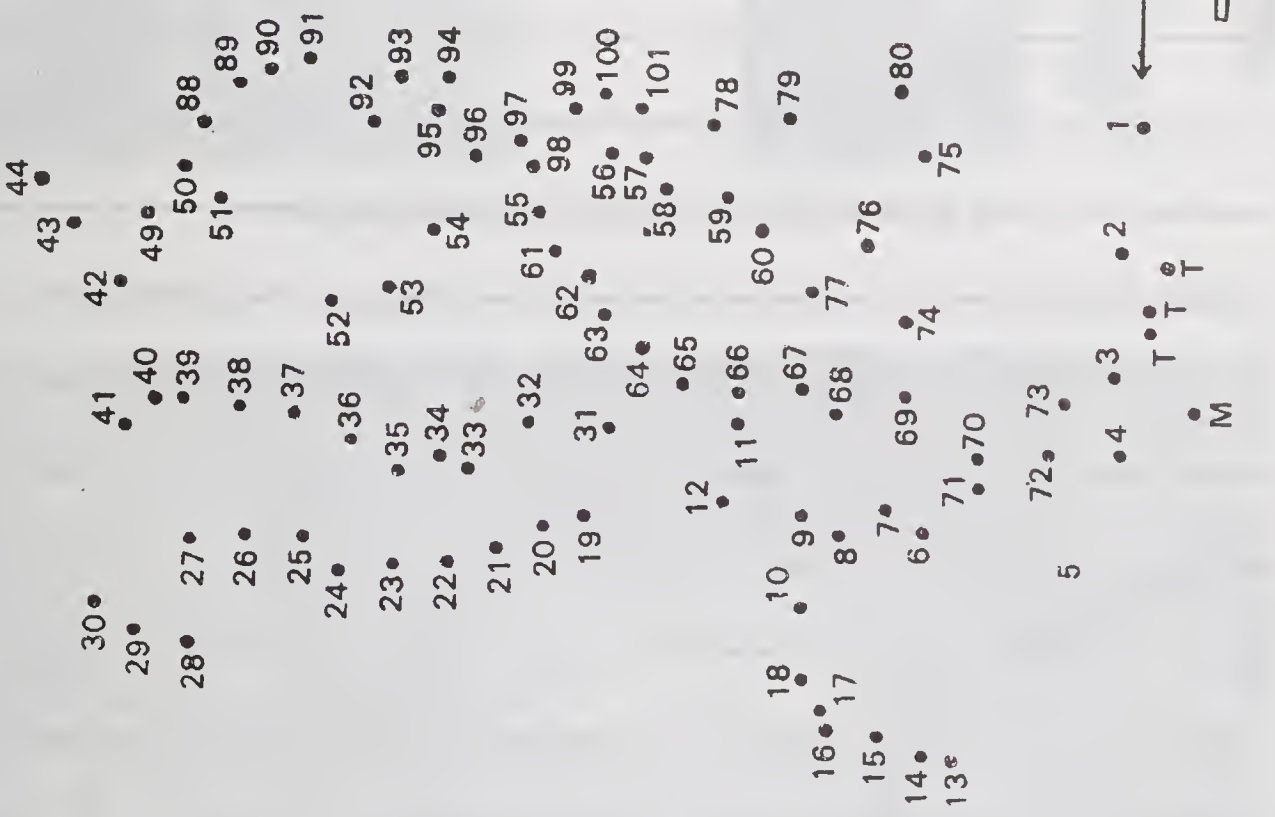
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45 46 47 48
 T T T

KANHERI

Location of caves

T--WATER TANK
 M--RELIC MOUND
 B--BOOKING OFFICE



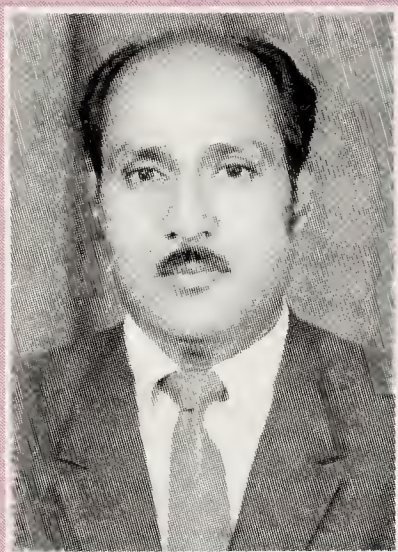
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□ BEAUTIFUL SCULPTURES AT KANHERI □

□ A BIG STUPA AT KANHERI, SIMILAR TO THOSE FOUND AT BHAJE CAVES





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